HRLSC | Human Rights Legal Support Centre

Annual Report | 2014-2015

Human Rights Legal Support Centre

Annual Report 2014-2015

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"Standing up to racism builds stronger communities" Ayesha Asghar settles @HRlegalhelp human rights case
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Message from the Chair

The Human Rights Legal Support Centre is pleased to present the Attorney General of Ontario with its 2014-15 Annual Report.

As Chair of the Centre's Board of Directors, I have been profoundly disturbed by the severity of the harm caused to many of the 25,000 callers who came to us with experiences of discrimination and harassment based on essential characteristics such as sex, country of origin or disability. And again this year, our cases demonstrated that racism persists and that race-based discrimination is something that happens to the young and old, whether wearing a hoodie or a well-made suit.

Let me add that I, an aging professor, am not immune. At our recent board meeting in Ottawa, I was unable to get a cab to stop until I was joined by some white colleagues.

Our clients who experienced racial profiling were simply trying to go about their daily lives and were stopped from doing so for one reason only – the colour of their skin.

For some, including many Muslims, the intersection of race and religion has further increased their vulnerability to virulent verbal assaults, in their workplaces or in accessing housing or services.

We applaud those civic and political leaders who have spoken out against racial profiling and other instances of discrimination and harassment that have been reported in the media in the past year.

And we deplore the actions of those few who have fanned the flames of intolerance.

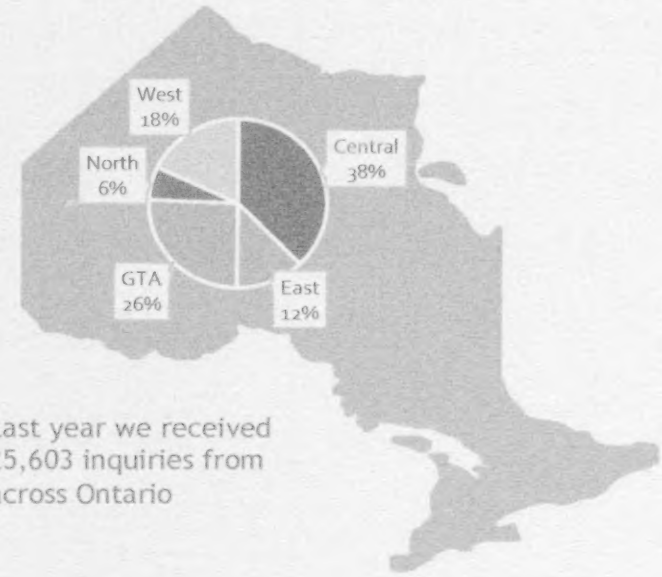
On behalf of the Board, I thank our staff for their effective advocacy in advancing human rights claims in Ontario.

Patrick Case
Chair
Board of Directors

Our Services

The Centre offers a toll-free telephone advice service, with TTY access, across Ontario. Our staff provide assistance in over 12 languages and immediate interpretation is available in 140 languages. Our office is headquartered in Toronto and has legal staff in Guelph, Windsor, Brampton, Hamilton, Ottawa, Sault Ste. Marie and Thunder Bay.

We help callers identify whether their human rights have been violated and decide if they should take legal steps. If they want to pursue a claim at the Human Rights Tribunal, we can help them file an application.

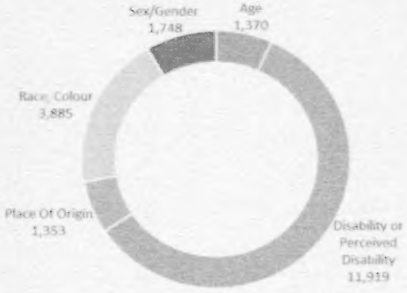


Last year we received 25,603 inquiries from across Ontario

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To read more about our services and service criteria, visit our website at www.hrlsc.on.ca

Trends in 2014-15



80% of the inquiries we received were about the 5 areas of discrimination described above. Other grounds are: Ancestry, Association, Citizenship, Creed, Ethnic Origin, Family and Martial Status, Gender Expression and Identity, Pregnancy, Receipt of Public Assistance, Record of Offences, Reprisal or Threat of Reprisal, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Orientation, and Sexual Solicitation, Advances or Reprisals.

In the past year, the Centre observed a link between increased public discussion of discrimination and harassment (whether in mainstream media or social media) and a corresponding increase in calls to our telephone advice line.

Sexual Harassment

Last year, we saw a 14% increase in inquiries about sexual harassment when compared with 2013-14. The statistics also show a 9% increase in the second half of the fiscal year, compared to the first half. High profile sexual harassment incidents reported in the media and the ensuing social media discussions may have led to an increase in these types of inquiries to the Centre.

In one recent case, a migrant worker at a farm contacted us after being subjected to unwanted sexual demands from her supervisor.

The Centre negotiated financial compensation for the worker and a requirement that the employer establish a workplace policy prohibiting sexual harassment and train all employees and supervisors at the start of each farming season.

Racial Profiling

In the past year, the Centre provided legal help in response to a steady stream of inquiries from racialized individuals who had been stopped by police without apparent justification. In 2014-15, we negotiated financial compensation for individuals who were the subject of random stops, as well as the removal of their "carding" records from police files.

One of our cases, Claybourn v. Toronto Police, resulted in a landmark decision from the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, allowing a person to file a human rights application even if they had previously complained about officer misconduct to a police disciplinary body. The Tribunal ruled that a person is free to make a human rights claim at the same time as pursuing a misconduct complaint.

That decision was challenged by the Ontario Provincial Police in a judicial review application to the courts.

Policing is not the only area where discrimination based on race is felt by Ontarians. The Centre also had cases involving school boards, restaurants and retail stores.

In this fiscal year the Centre settled 76 cases with race as a ground. The Centre negotiated:

- $530,000 compensation for the discrimination
- $243,240 in special damages including lost wages

Gender Identity

Across the country, media coverage of discrimination against transgender people sparked increased discussion about gender identity and expression.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission contributed to the public discussion with the release in April 2014 of its Policy on preventing discrimination because of gender identity and gender expression.

The Centre received 47% more inquiries in 2014-15 about gender identity and gender expression than the previous year.

We helped individuals who had experienced discrimination based on gender identity or expression in schools, in prisons, in workplaces and in participating in sports.

The Centre achieved excellent results in litigating and in negotiating settlements for our clients.

For example, in 2014-15, we negotiated more than $330,000 in compensation for gender identity discrimination, an increase of 45% over the previous year.

In one of our cases, we negotiated a settlement to ensure an entire industry association implemented staff training on issues of gender identity.

FAST STATS

SETTLEMENTS

In 2014-15, we represented applicants in negotiating settlements in 564 human rights applications. In each case, we negotiated financial compensation for the applicant, often in addition to measures to prevent future discrimination. Of these:

287

Applications were successfully settled at mediation.

196

Applications were successfully settled at a hearing (usually just before or on the first day).

53

Applications were successfully settled before an application was filed at the Tribunal, diverting these applicants from the Tribunal hearing process.

Human Rights Stories

Ontario's *Human Rights Code* has very specific protections for people who have faced discrimination. There is often confusion about what *Code* violations in Ontario look like on the ground.

We hope our cases give you a clearer picture of how ordinary people assert their rights to make Ontario a better and fairer place for all of us.

With the Centre's help, ordinary Ontarians fought for their rights and changed not only their individual circumstances, but improved the situation for others facing discrimination where they work, live, and access services.

Cases settled before a hearing

The Centre tries to settle applications at every stage of the process, negotiating financial compensation for our clients, as well as broader remedies to prevent future discrimination.

Protecting transgender inmates: integration not segregation

When Breitlynne Twa was first taken into custody, she was housed in a male facility and segregated from the other inmates. After about a month, she was transferred to a women's facility, but remained in segregation, allegedly for her own safety. For many months after that, Ms. Twa was held in isolation - denied access to the yard, to work opportunities and to programming.

The Centre represented Ms. Twa in negotiating a settlement that impacted a new province-wide policy.

The new *Admission, Classification and Placement of Trans Inmates Policy* provides for:

- Integration (rather than segregation) of trans inmates
- Placement according to inmate's self-identified gender
- Inmate input into an Intake/Plan of Care form on admission
- Maximization of privacy
- Access to personal items related to lived gender identity
- Customized, job-specific, mandatory human rights training, including content specific to gender identity/ expression.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission intervened in Ms. Twa's application.

Improved accessibility for jurors with disabilities

The Ministry of the Attorney General's Court Services Division expanded its commitment to provide barrier-free access to courts across the province after the Centre negotiated a human rights settlement.

Photo: Sun Media

The sweeping review of practices and procedures arose out of one woman's attempt to participate in the jury selection process. Carol Mehlenbacher, who is blind, arrived at an Ontario courthouse to find visual aids unavailable. She was relieved from jury duty. With help from the Human Rights Legal Support Centre, Mehlenbacher and Court Services officials crafted a range of changes to make courts more accessible.

The first step was a review of the accessibility resources available in Ontario's courthouses.

Changes to the jury process now include:

- The juror summons contains contact information for disability-related help at the local court
- Prospective jurors are directly connected to the local accessibility coordinator to determine how best to meet the person's disability needs
- Equipment is arranged as needed
- An updated jury management manual clarifies staff procedures when disability-related needs are raised
- All staff receive ongoing accessibility training.

Racist comments at work from manager

The Centre represented an African-Canadian employee who lost his job after an altercation with a manager. The manager had accused our client of workplace misconduct and made it clear to others that he was uncomfortable working with him because he was black. The manager told others in the workplace that his daughter was afraid of black men.

Our client reported this information to his supervisor. No investigation was conducted by management. Eventually, a physical altercation between our client and the manager led to the manager calling our client a "stupid n------". Our client was fired.

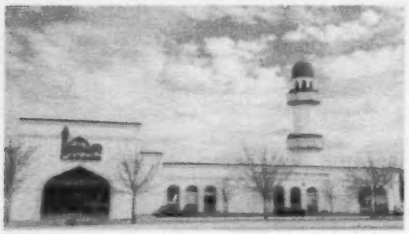
The Centre negotiated an agreement requiring the employer to:

- Pay financial compensation for the discrimination
- Develop new guidelines for investigations of discrimination and harassment claims at the workplace
- Provide human rights training for the management.

City of Mississauga paves smoother road for congregants

The Centre negotiated a settlement between the City of Mississauga and congregants at the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) mosque in Toronto.

MD Khalid and his son Salman were shocked when additional parking restrictions suddenly appeared a block from their mosque, banning parking on Fridays between noon and 3pm – the most important prayer time of the week.



After being unable to resolve the matter, Mr. Khalid and his son filed a human rights application, believing that the new restriction specifically targeted their religion. The Centre negotiated an agreement to revise parking restrictions near the mosque.

Disabled northern Ontario travelers settled human rights claim with ONTC

Travel options in Ontario's north are limited, but even those options were not available to Bradley Bondar and Lisa Buck because buses did not have accessible washrooms.

Bondar and Buck settled joint human rights claims with the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission (ONTC).

Their persistence gave northern Ontarians with disabilities better access to transportation options.

As part of the settlement negotiated by the Centre, ONTC agreed to:

- Order three motor coaches with wheelchair accessible washrooms
- Make every effort to have these coaches available to passengers with disabilities upon request
- Require all drivers to complete human rights training before operating any equipment.

Discriminatory bylaws update

Fourth municipality agrees to remove discriminatory zoning bylaws

Many Ontario municipalities use by-laws to restrict the location of group homes. The Centre filed human rights applications against four municipalities alleging that their group home by-laws were discriminatory. We represented the Dream Team, a group of advocates living with mental health disabilities.

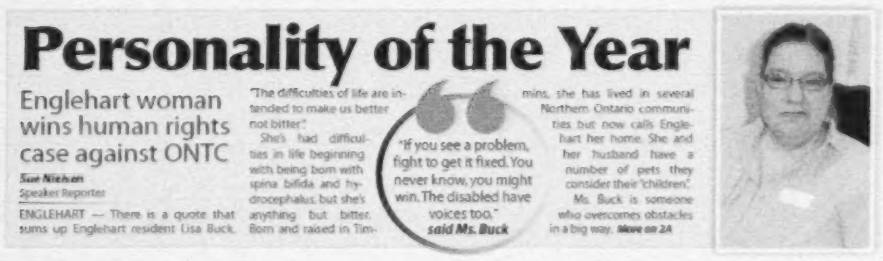
In October of 2014, the fourth and final municipality settled the legal challenge over discriminatory bylaws. The Smiths Falls bylaw had included a section that stated:

"Group homes for the mentally handicapped shall be restricted to a maximum total of 36 residents in all such Homes."

The Ontario Human Rights Commission intervened in these applications, supporting the position that the bylaws were discriminatory

Dream Team member, Philip Dufresne commented:

"In the future, people will scratch their heads and wonder why a legal process was even necessary to stop people from being excluded."



Personality of the Year

Englehart woman wins human rights case against ONTC

Sue Nielsen
Speaker Reporter

ENGLEHART — There is a quote that sums up Englehart resident Lisa Buck.

"The difficulties of life are intended to make us better not bitter."

She's had difficulties in life beginning with being born with spina bifida and hydrocephalus, but she's anything but bitter. Born and raised in Timmins, she has lived in several Northern Ontario communities but now calls Englehart her home. She and her husband have a number of pets they consider their "children."

Ms. Buck is someone who overcomes obstacles in a big way. Move on 2A

"If you see a problem, fight to get it fixed. You never know, you might win. The disabled have voices too."
said Ms. Buck

FAST STATS

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To read about the background of these human rights applications, visit our website at www.hrlsc.on.ca

REPRESENTATION

440 mediations attended

81 hearings attended

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To read more about our statistics, visit our website at www.hrlsc.on.ca

Cases decided at the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario

J.D. v. The Ultimate Cut Unisex, 2014 HRTO 956

Three women worked as receptionists at a hair salon until ongoing sexual harassment forced them to quit. The Centre represented all three applicants and argued successfully that the women were:

- subjected to a poisoned environment and
- suffered reprisal for complaining about the harassment.

The Tribunal determined the employer failed to investigate the harassment.

The Tribunal found the salon owner "made the applicants feel uncomfortable and constantly nervous about how far he might try to go with his sexual harassment, solicitations and advances. When he was in the salon, they were on tenterhooks."

The Tribunal also found the women worked "until it became so intolerable that they understandably quit. They quit because of his unwelcome, sexual behaviour and because there was no protection from him."

The Tribunal ordered (for the three women together):

- $100,000 as financial compensation for the discrimination and harassment
- $40,000 in lost wages.

Read the full decision on CanLii

Lugonia v. Arista Homes, 2014 HRTO 1531

Ms. Lugonia quit her job to accept a maternity leave contract with Arista Homes. On her third shift, she revealed to a co-worker that she had just found out she was pregnant. When she arrived for her fourth shift, she was terminated.

The Centre represented Ms. Lugonia at the Tribunal, obtaining a decision requiring the company to:

- Pay $15,000 as financial compensation for the discrimination
- Retain a human rights expert to develop and implement a comprehensive human rights policy
- Provide all current and future employees with copies of the new policy
- Deliver the new policy within six months to the Centre.

Read the full decision on CanLii

Wesley v. 2252466 Ontario Inc. o/a The Grounds Guys, 2014 HRTO 1591

Mr. Wesley, an Aboriginal man from Northern Ontario who is deaf, lost his job on a ground crew when his employer claimed there was no more work. The Centre represented him at the Tribunal, arguing that he was fired based on multiple discriminatory grounds including Aboriginal ancestry and disability.

The Tribunal decided the case based on his disability alone.

The Tribunal ordered the company to:

- Pay $25,500 as financial compensation for the discrimination and
- Pay $8,200 for lost wages
- Train management on disability and the duty to accommodate employees.

Unfortunately, the employer filed for bankruptcy. The Centre was unable to collect the financial award for Mr. Wesley.
Read the full decision on CanLii

Emra v. Impression Bridal Inc., 2014 HRTO 1736

The Centre represented Mr. Emra who was fired after a disability-related absence from work. Although his employer argued that there were performance issues, the Tribunal found otherwise.

The Tribunal found that Mr. Emra "was acutely vulnerable at the time of his termination. He was humiliated by the fact that his termination was tied directly to his disability."

The Tribunal ordered:

- $25,000 as financial compensation for the discrimination
- $33,280 for lost wages.

The Tribunal also ordered the company to:

- Retain a human rights expert to develop new human rights policies and
- Provide training for all employees on the new policies.

Read the full decision on CanLii

Sharpe v. Cheuk, 2015 HRTO 10

Mr. Sharpe rented an apartment that needed repairs. After he made several complaints to his landlord, he received a letter requiring him to move out and citing his source of income – social assistance – as one reason for the eviction. He moved out.

Mr. Sharpe contacted the Centre and filed a human rights application. The Tribunal found that the landlord had discriminated against Mr. Sharpe on the basis of receipt of public assistance and ordered:

- $10,000 as financial compensation for the discrimination
- $1,200 as compensation for loss of property and moving expenses.

Read the full decision on CanLII

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

We thank all of the legal and community partners who help us deliver information and service to communities across Ontario. Read more at www.hrlsc.on.ca/en/about-us/community-partnerships

Performance Measures

Each year the Centre's Board of Directors sets goals for our services. Our goals for 2014-15, and our progress in achieving them, follow.

Client satisfaction

Target: 85% of clients report that they were satisfied or very satisfied with our services.

Achievement: **96% of clients who responded to surveys rated our services as good or very good.**

In addition to formal feedback, we get hundreds of thank you notes from clients each year. See a few excerpts in the right column.

Settlement rate at mediation

Target: 70% of our cases that reach mediation are resolved at this stage.

Achievement: **69% of mediation cases settled.**

Cases settled before a hearing

Target: 130 cases are settled between mediation (if applicable) and before a hearing.

Achievement: **127 cases settled between mediation and before a hearing.**

Number of inquiries answered

Target: 26,000 inquiries answered.

Achievement: **25,603 inquiries answered.**

Telephone answer rate

Target: 82% of calls answered.*

Achievement: **84% of intake calls answered.**

Cases settled at hearing

Target: 65% of hearing stage cases are settled before or on the first day of a hearing.

Achievement: **81% of hearing cases settled.**

Number of media events

Target: At least five human rights stories linked with our services receive positive mainstream media coverage.

Achievement: **Six major cases received positive coverage in mainstream outlets.** There were approximately 57 media stories on a variety of human rights topics generated by or responded to by the Centre.

THANK YOU NOTES

"You did such a great job on so many fronts. Beyond your considerable legal expertise you provided me, on many occasions, a proper prospective, support, guidance and assurance. I found a great deal of comfort in your direction."

"Win or lose I thank you and the rest of the staff at the HRLSC."

"Because of you I stood up - you boosted my confidence, you gave me strength and gave me the strategy to deal with them even though there were four against one."

"I feel at peace with all that has happened and look forward to seeing the policy change this spring."

"One happy momma bear! Looks like I will qualify for maternity leave thanks to your letter and all without it turning ugly."

*The target reflects a realistic and achievable level of service within a fixed (in 2008) budget and allows us to meet demand for the Centre's other legal services. An 82% answer rate generally corresponds to wait times of 6-9 minutes.

Board of Directors and Staff

Patrick Case was appointed as Chair of the Human Rights Legal Support Centre October 20, 2010 until October 19, 2018.

Nancy Gignac was appointed September 17, 2009 to November 25, 2017.

Mary Gusella was appointed September 17, 2009 to November 25, 2017.

Patrick Nadjiwan was appointed September 17, 2009 to November 25, 2017.

Gina Papageorgiou was appointed April 9, 2008 to May 7, 2016.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To read full biographies of our board members, visit our website at www.hrlsc.on.ca

The staff work in teams of lawyers, paralegals, human rights advisors and representatives, legal case coordinators as well as administrative and management staff. This structure allows the staff to share information, skills and resources and to problem-solve together in small groups.
Our legal staff come to the Centre with a wealth of experience in human rights, labour, civil litigation, and administrative law. Our lawyers and paralegal staff have worked at community legal clinics, employment law firms, the Ontario Human Rights Commission, the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, the Information and Privacy Commission, the Ministry of the Attorney General, the Office of the Public Guardian and the Pay Equity Hearings Tribunal.

Contact Us

Follow us on twitter @HRLegalHelp

Call Us:

GTA:	416-597-4900
Toll Free:	1-866-625-5179
TTY:	416-597-4903
TTY Toll Free:	1-866-612-8627
Fax:	416-597-4901

Write to Us:
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If you need a copy of this report in an alternative format, please contact us by one of the above methods or by e-mail web@hrlsc.on.ca.

ISSN 1923-0389

HUMAN RIGHTS LEGAL SUPPORT CENTRE

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

MARCH 31, 2015

HILBORN LLP

HILBORN LLP

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Director of
Human Rights Legal Support Centre

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Human Rights Legal Support Centre, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2015, and the statements of operations, net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements
Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility
Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Centre's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Centre's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion
In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Human Rights Legal Support Centre as at March 31, 2015, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Hilborn LLP

Toronto, Ontario
July 17, 2015

Chartered Professional Accountants
Licensed Public Accountants

HUMAN RIGHTS LEGAL SUPPORT CENTRE

Statement of Financial Position

March 31	2015 $	2014 $
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash	**197,267**	302,688
Accounts receivable	**6,136**	568
HST recoverable	**59,907**	68,411
Prepaid expenses	**174,046**	138,864
	437,356	510,531
Long-term assets		
Property and equipment (note 3)	**48,975**	35,068
Intangible assets (note 4)	**173,855**	247,914
	222,830	282,982
	660,186	793,513
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	**216,245**	364,245
NET ASSETS (note 6)	**443,941**	429,268
	660,186	793,513

HUMAN RIGHTS LEGAL SUPPORT CENTRE

Statements of Operations

Year ended March 31	2015 $	2014 $
Revenues		
Ministry of the Attorney General	**6,021,200**	5,756,200
Other income	**331**	10,845
	6,021,531	5,767,045
Expenditures		
Salaries and wages	**4,222,803**	4,190,764
Employee benefits	**822,284**	795,475
Services	**480,595**	506,555
Communications	**106,954**	131,302
Supplies and equipment	**48,003**	89,110
Province wide service delivery	**86,994**	77,867
Travel	**60,325**	58,378
Board expenses	**25,413**	29,853
Amortization	**153,487**	169,271
	6,006,858	6,048,575
Excess of revenues over expenditures (expenditures over revenues) for year	**14,673**	(281,530)

Statements of Net Assets

Year ended March 31	2015 $	2014 $
Net assets, beginning of year	**429,268**	710,798
Excess of revenues over expenditures (expenditures over revenues) for year	**14,673**	(281,530)
Net assets, end of year	**443,941**	429,268

HUMAN RIGHTS LEGAL SUPPORT CENTRE

Statement of Cash Flows

Year ended March 31	2015 $	2014 $
Cash flows from operating activities		
Excess of revenues over expenditures (expenditures over revenues) for year	**14,673**	(281,530)
Adjustments to determine net cash provided by (used in) operating activities		
Amortization	**153,487**	169,271
	168,160	(112,259)
Change in non-cash working capital items		
Increase in accounts receivable	**(5,568)**	(568)
Decrease (increase) in HST recoverable	**8,504**	(13,656)
Increase in prepaid expenses	**(35,182)**	(57,007)
Decrease in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	**(148,000)**	(4,654)
	(12,086)	(188,144)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of property and equipment	**(93,335)**	-
Purchase of intangible assets	**-**	(13,460)
	(93,335)	(13,460)
Net change in cash during the year	**(105,421)**	(201,604)
Cash, beginning of year	**302,688**	504,292
Cash, end of year	**197,267**	302,688

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2015

Nature of operations

Human Rights Legal Support Centre ("the Centre") was established December 20, 2006, as a corporation without share capital as a result of Royal Assent being granted to Section 45.11 of the Human Rights Code Amendment Act, 2006. The legislation took effect on June 30, 2008 and the Centre opened on that day.

The Centre is not a Crown agency, but is designated as an operational service agency and reports to the Ministry of the Attorney General ("MAG"). The Centre is independent from, but accountable to the Government of Ontario. Pursuant to a Memorandum of Unde standing ("MOU") between the Centre and the Attorney General for the Province of Ontario the objectives of the Centre are:

(a) to establish and administer a cost-effective and efficient system for providing support services, including legal services, respecting applications to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal under Part IV of the code; and

(b) to establish policies and priorities for the provision of support services based on financial resources.

The Centre is a not-for-profit organization, as described in Section 149(1)(l) of the Income Tax Act, and therefore is not subject to either federal or provincial income taxes.

1. **Significant accounting policies**

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations ("ASNFPO") and include the following significant accounting policies:

(a) **Revenue recognition**

The Centre receives revenue from the MAG. The amounts are recorded as revenue when received or receivable. All of the funds received are restricted as to use for purposes set out in the MOU.

(b) **Financial instruments**

(i) **Measurement of financial instruments**

The Centre initially measures its financial assets and financial liabilities at fair value adjusted by transaction costs in the case where a financial asset or financial liability is subsequently measured at amortized cost.

The Centre subsequently measures all its financial assets and financial liabilities at amortized cost.

Financial assets measured at amortized cost include cash and accounts receivable.

Financial liabilities measured at amortized cost include accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

March 31, 2015

1. **Significant accounting policies (continued)**

(ii) **Impairment**

At the end of each reporting period, the Centre assesses whether there are any indications that a financial asset measured at amortized cost may be impaired. Objective evidence of impairment includes observable data that comes to the attention of the Centre. In the opinion of management there is no evidence of impairment of financial assets.

(c) **Property and equipment**

The costs of capital assets are capitalized upon meeting the criteria for recognition as a capital asset; otherwise, costs are expensed as incurred. The cost of a capital asset comprises its purchase price and any directly attributable cost of preparing the asset for its intended use.

Capital assets are measured at cost less accumulated amortization and accumulated impairment losses.

Amortization is provided for on a straight-line basis at rates designed to amortize the cost of the capital assets over their estimated useful lives. The annual amortization rates are as follows:

Computer equipment	3 years
Furniture and fixtures	5 years

A capital asset is tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that its carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognized in the statements of operations when the carrying amount of the asset exceeds the sum of the undiscounted cash flows resulting from its use and eventual disposition. The impairment loss is measured as the amount by which the carrying amount of the capital asset exceeds its fair value.

An impairment loss is not reversed if the fair value of the capital asset subsequently increases.

March 31, 2015

1. **Significant accounting policies (continued)**

(d) **Intangible assets**

The costs of intangible assets are capitalized upon meeting the criteria for recognition as an intangible asset, otherwise, costs are expensed as incurred. The cost of a separately acquired intangible asset comprises its purchase price and any directly attributable cost of preparing the asset for its intended use.

Intangible assets are measured at cost less accumulated amortization and accumulated impairment losses.

Amortization of application software is provided for on a straight-line basis at rates designed to amortize the cost of the intangible assets over their estimated useful lives. The annual amortization rates are as follows:

Client tracking tool	5 years
Computer software	3 years

An intangible asset is tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that its carrying amount may not be recoverable. If any potential impairment is identified, then the amount of the impairment is quantified by comparing the carrying value of the intangible asset to its fair value. Any impairment of the intangible asset is charged to income in the period in which the impairment is determined.

An impairment loss is not reversed if the fair value of the intangible asset subsequently increases.

(e) **Management estimates**

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make judgments, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of accounting policies and the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the current period. Actual results may differ from these estimates, the impact of which would be recorded in future periods.

Estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognized in the year in which the estimates are revised and in any future years affected.

March 31, 2015

2. **Financial instruments risks**

The Centre is exposed to financial risks in its financial instruments as described below.

The financial instruments of the Centre and the nature of the risks to which it may be subject are as follows:

	Risks				
			Market risk		
Financial instrument	Credit	Liquidity	Currency	Interest rate	Other price
Cash	X			X	
Accounts receivable	X				
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities		X			

(a) **Credit risk**

Credit risk is the risk that one party to a transaction will fail to discharge an obligation and cause the other party to incur a financial loss. Cash is held in a major Canadian chartered bank. It is management's opinion that the Centre is not exposed to significant credit risk arising from its financial instruments.

(b) **Liquidity risk**

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Centre cannot repay its obligations when they become due to its creditors. The Centre meets its liquidity requirements by preparing and monitoring detailed forecasts of cash flows from operations, anticipating investing and financing activities and holding assets that can readily be converted into cash. In the opinion of management the Centre is not exposed to significant liquidity risk arising from its financial instruments.

(c) **Market risk**

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Market risk is comprised of currency risk, interest rate risk and other price risk. In the opinion of management the Centre is not exposed to significant market risk.

(d) **Currency risk**

Currency risk refers to the risk that the fair value of financial instruments or future cash flows associated with the instruments will fluctuate relative to the Canadian dollar due to changes in foreign exchange rates. At this time the Centre has minimal transactions involving foreign currency, therefore in the opinion of management the Centre is not exposed to currency risk.

(e) **Interest rate risk**

Interest rate risk refers to the risk that the fair value of financial instruments or future cash flows associated with the instruments will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. In the opinion of management the interest risk exposure to the Centre is not significant.

March 31, 2015

2. **Financial instruments risks (continued)**

(f) **Price risk**

Other price risk refers to the risk that the fair value of financial instruments or future cash flows associated with the instruments will fluctuate because of changes in market prices (other than those arising from currency risk or interest rate risk), whether those changes are caused by factors specific to the individual instrument or its issuer or factors affecting all similar instruments traded in the market. The Centre is not exposed to other price risk.

(g) **Concentration risk**

Concentration of risk may arise from the concentration of counterparties belonging to specific industry sectors, categories of credit quality or geographical distribution or the existence of a limited number of individual counterparties which could result in a higher risk to the business in the event of the occurrence of an economic event which impacts the counterparties in a similar manner. In management's opinion, there is no significant concentration of risk in its financial instruments.

(h) **Changes in risk**

There have been no changes in the Centre's risk exposures from the prior year.

3. **Property and equipment**

	2015		
	Cost $	Accumulated Amortization $	Net $
Computer equipment	298,496	249,521	48,975
Furniture and fixtures	4,150	4,150	-
	302,646	253,671	48,975

	2014		
	Cost $	Accumulated Amortization $	Net $
Computer equipment	295,471	261,233	34,238
Furniture and fixtures	4,150	3,320	830
	299,621	264,553	35,068

March 31, 2015

4. **Intangible assets**

	2015		
	Cost $	Accumulated Amortization $	Net $
Client tracking tool	613,925	458,339	155,586
Computer software	103,060	84,791	18,269
	716,985	543,130	173,855

	2014		
	Cost $	Accumulated Amortization $	Net $
Client tracking tool	574,012	340,959	233,053
Computer software	133,347	118,486	14,861
	707,359	459,445	247,914

5. **Pension plan**

The Centre through the sponsorship of MAG is a participating employer to a defined benefit plan administered by the Ontario Pension Board ("OPB") for employees of the province of Ontario. Based on contribution rates as set by the OPB, the Centre matches employee contributions to the plan at the rate of 6.4% of earnings up to the CPP yearly pension maximum entitlement ("YPME") and 9.5% for earnings above the YPME. The plan is being accounted for as a defined contribution plan as there is not sufficient information to follow the reporting requirements of a defined benefit plan. The Centre contributed $264,920 (2014 - $269,271) to the plan which is recorded in employee benefits in the statement of operations.

March 31, 2015

6. **Grant revenue allocation**

The Centre has expended grant funds received as follows:

	2015 $	2014 $
Revenue - Ministry of Attorney General	6,021,200	5,756,200
Other income	331	10,845
Operating expenses	(6,006,858)	(6,048,575)
Amortization included in operating expenses	153,487	169,271
Purchase of property and equipment	(93,335)	(13,460)
	74,825	(125,719)

Reconciliation of net assets

	Capital $	Operating $	Total $
Net assets, beginning of year	282,981	146,287	429,268
Excess of revenues over expenditures (expenditures over revenues) for year	(153,487)	168,160	14,673
Funds transferred to capital fund	93,336	(93,336)	-
Net assets, end of year	222,830	221,111	443,941

7. **Commitments**

The Centre has entered into commitments to lease various office equipment. Annual equipment lease payment as follows:

	$
2016	1,526
2017	1,017
	2,543

8. **Economic dependence**

The Centre derives all its revenues from the Ministry of the Attorney General.

9. **Comparative figures**

The financial statements have been reclassified, where applicable, to conform to the presentation used in the current year. The changes do not affect prior year net assets.

Human Rights Legal Support Centre

www.hrlsc.on.ca

This report is also available in alternative formats. For further information, please contact us at:

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